



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/650,258	08/29/2000	SATOSHI NORIMATSU	A-378	9486
802	7590	09/02/2004	EXAMINER	
DELLETT AND WALTERS P. O. BOX 2786 PORTLAND, OR 97208-2786			JONES, SCOTT E	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		3713		
DATE MAILED: 09/02/2004				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/650,258	NORIMATSU, SATOSHI
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Scott E. Jones	3713

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 May 2004.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-9,13 and 14 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-9,13 and 14 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 29 August 2000 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ .	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. This office action is in response to the amendment and request for continued examination filed on May 27, 2004 in which applicant amends claim 1, cancels claims 10-12, adds claims 13-14, and responds to the claim rejections. Claims 1-9 and 13-14 are pending.

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

2. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 was filed in this application after appeal to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences, but prior to a decision on the appeal. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the appeal has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114 and prosecution in this application has been reopened pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on May 27, 2004 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-9 and 13-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morawiec (U.S. 6,010,405) in view of Miyata et al. (U.S. 6,392,644).

Morawiec discloses a videogame system having an audiovisual presentation designed to simulate an episodic nature of a comic book page. The audiovisual presentation is defined by distinct panels sequentially arranged to form a page layout, the panel limits the player-controlled character

play to in an active panel in which the character must complete tasks before proceeding forward in the sequential arrangement of panels to create the comic book story. Additionally, the videogame system allows a player variety by providing alternate routes in which to traverse the panels thereby enabling a game player to determine the story line. Graphic effects are also provided to enhance the comic book medium simulation. For instance, the active panel display has a greater three-dimensional feel than the dormant panels which are flatter in appearance. Morawiec further discloses:

Regarding Claims 1, 8, and 9:

- a game console having a microprocessor with a player-controlled input device for providing signal outputs to the console which are responsive to player input and provide audiovisual images on a display in response to player's inputs (Abstract, Column 3, lines 40-52 and Figure 6).

Regarding Claims 3, 4, 6:

- a microprocessor and memory for providing a scene change (a player completing tasks in one panel and proceeding to the next panel in the comic book medium simulation) (Abstract, Column 1, lines 45-60, Column 2, lines 3-36, and Figures 1, 2).

Regarding Claim 13:

- said movement processing unit moves repeatedly the character along one of the courses, wherein said image preparing unit generates the plurality of the two-dimensional images including different contents corresponding to said plurality of viewpoints set by the viewpoint setting unit (Figure 1 and Column 3, line 62-Column 4, line 34). Morawiec discloses allowing a player variety by providing alternate

routes in which to traverse the panels of a comic book page thereby enabling a game player to determine the story line. Morawiec accomplishes this goal by providing directional arrows, as shown in Figure 1, to show the player alternate routes to take. The story is told/played in a sequential/forward-only fashion. Therefore, a player can play a same selected portion of said predetermined course, that is from the start panel to the ending panel in the comic book story, and traverse alternate panels along the way having different viewpoints at different times for the storyline.

Regarding Claim 14:

- wherein said image preparing unit generates the plurality of the two-dimensional images including different contents with corresponding the common three-dimensional game space to each of the plurality of viewpoints (Figure 1 and Column 3, line 62-Column 4, line 34). Morawiec discloses allowing a player variety by providing alternate routes in which to traverse the panels of a comic book page thereby enabling a game player to determine the story line. Morawiec accomplishes this goal by providing directional arrows, as shown in Figure 1, to show the player alternate routes to take. The story is told/played in a sequential/forward-only fashion. Therefore, a player can play a same selected portion of said predetermined course, that is from the start panel to the ending panel in the comic book story, and traverse alternate panels along the way having different viewpoints at different times for the storyline..

Morawiec seems to lack explicitly stating:

Regarding Claims 1, 8, and 9:

- setting a plurality of viewpoints in the field of view in which said character is included; and selectively preparing two-dimensional images corresponding to said plurality of viewpoints.

Regarding Claim 2:

- storing image data necessary for preparing two-dimensional images corresponding to one of said plurality of viewpoints.

Regarding Claim 5:

- different three-dimensional objects in the game space are displayed within the field of view corresponding to a plurality of viewpoints.

Regarding Claim 7:

- the game system changes the level of difficulty of the events corresponding to the plurality of viewpoints.

Miyata et al. teaches of a three-dimensional graphics display system that jointly uses two and three-dimensional image representations thereby effectively reducing the amount of data to process.

Miyata et al. teaches:

Regarding Claims 1, 8, and 9:

- setting a plurality of viewpoints in the field of view in which said character is included; and selectively preparing two-dimensional images corresponding to said plurality of viewpoints (Abstract, Figures 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11, 19, 23, Column 6, lines 1-25, Column 7, lines 12-16, 50-65, and Column 17, lines 60-67).

Regarding Claim 2:

- storing image data necessary for preparing two-dimensional images corresponding to one of said plurality of viewpoints (Abstract, Figures 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11, 19, 23, Column 6, lines 1-25, Column 7, lines 12-16, 50-65, and Column 17, lines 60-67).

Regarding Claim 5:

- different three-dimensional objects in the game space are displayed within the field of view corresponding to a plurality of viewpoints (Abstract, Figures 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11, 19, 23, Column 6, lines 1-25, Column 7, lines 12-16, 50-65, and Column 17, lines 60-67).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time of the applicant's invention, to incorporate the graphic display system of Miyata et al. in the videogame system of Morawiec. Doing so allows for simultaneous two and three-dimensional image representations thus reducing the amount of image data processing and freeing up computer resources for other necessary game functions.

Regarding Claim 7, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time of the applicant's invention, to incorporate different difficulty levels for each sequential panel in Morawiec's comic book videogame simulation system. Increasing the difficulty of a game scene (game stage) as a game progresses is notoriously well known in the art.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed March 17, 2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

6. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection to claims 1-9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morawiec (U.S. 6,010,405) in view of Miyata et al. (U.S. 6,392,644). Applicant alleges Morawiec is unclear as to whether a character moves along a course in a three-dimensional

game space as in the instant invention. The examiner asserts Morawiec's character moves in both two-dimensions (distinct panels shown as a comic strip) and three-dimensions (the active panel selected by player wherein a player completes a task in a three-dimensional space). Therefore, for the reasons discussed hereinabove, the rejection to claims 1-9 is maintained.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott E. Jones whose telephone number is (703) 308-7133. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday, 6:30 A.M. - 5:00 P.M..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Scott Jones can be reached on (703) 308-7133. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Scott E. Jones
Examiner
Art Unit 3713

sej

